



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

December 6, 2005

MEMORANDUM TO: Secretarial Officers and Heads of Field Organizations

FROM: John Spitaleri Shaw
Assistant Secretary for
Environment, Safety and Health

SUBJECT: Reminder Regarding Annual National Environmental
Policy Act (NEPA) Planning Summaries

One focus of the recent conference, *NEPA 35: Spotlight on Environmental Excellence*, sponsored by the Department of Energy (DOE) in partnership with the Council on Environmental Quality, was the important role that senior managers play in the NEPA process. Your early involvement in the process can make a difference in the outcome. In this regard, DOE Order 451.1B, NEPA Compliance Program, requires you to submit an annual NEPA planning summary to the Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety and Health by January 31 of each year and make it available to the public. Preparation of the annual NEPA planning summary will ensure that you are involved early in your organization's NEPA planning process and that resources are allocated to enable timely compliance. As I stated at the conference, "it is much easier to protect environmental resources at the outset of an action than to go back after the fact and try to remedy the situation."

Under Section 4.d of the Order, an annual NEPA planning summary must describe briefly: (1) the status of ongoing NEPA compliance activities, (2) any environmental assessments expected to be prepared in the next 12 months, (3) any environmental impact statements expected to be prepared in the next 24 months, and (4) the planned cost and schedule for completion of each NEPA review identified.

In 2003, this office issued informal guidance to provide flexibility in meeting the reporting requirements while encouraging the application of the NEPA review process as early as possible in the planning stages for DOE proposals. The guidance and electronic report forms are available on the DOE NEPA Web site at <http://www.eh.doe.gov/nepa/planningsummaries.html>. I encourage you to use the electronic templates for preparing and submitting your 2006 planning summaries.

For your convenience, I am also distributing this reminder to NEPA Compliance Officers (NCOs) to facilitate preparation of the NEPA planning summaries. If you have any questions in this regard, please direct them to Carol Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance, at 202-586-4600.

cc: DOE NEPA Compliance Officers



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